

More than 60 percent of Washington State's population relies on ground water as a drinking water source.

When properly sited, constructed, operated and maintained, UIC wells dispose of waste fluids safely and cost effectively. This helps to protect underground sources of drinking water from contamination.

A *drywell* is one type of underground injection control well (UIC). Drywells are often used in Washington State to manage stormwater along our roads and in our parking lots.

You have probably heard much about stormwater disposal into our rivers. Why are we concerned about stormwater going into rivers? Because if it is not treated, stormwater can carry pollutants picked up from surface areas into our waterways.



Whom do I contact for more information?

Underground Injection Control
Washington Dept. of Ecology
P.O. Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-7600
Phone: (360) 407-6143
E-mail: maha461@ecy.wa.gov
[www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/
grndwtr/uic/](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/grndwtr/uic/)



If you need this document in an alternate format, please call us at 360-407-6404. Persons with hearing loss can call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with a speech disability can call 877-833-6341.



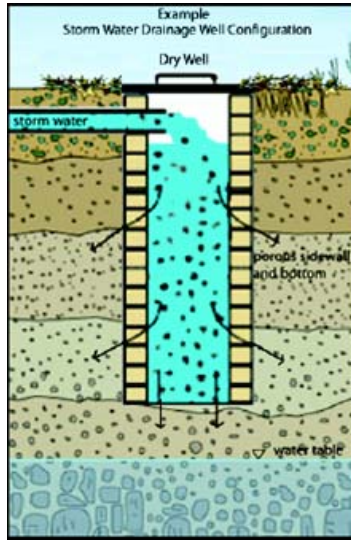
Drywells: What should I know about them?



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What is a UIC well?

A **UIC** or *Underground Injection Control* well is a human-made hole used to put water or other fluids into the ground. A *drywell* is one type of UIC well.



Other types of UIC wells used in Washington State are infiltration trenches with perforated pipe, drain fields, French drains or holes deeper than wide at the land surface used to drain fluids from the ground surface. A *fluid* is any flowing matter, regardless of whether it is liquid, semisolid, sludge, or gas.

How are UIC wells typically used?

Washington uses the majority of its UIC wells to dispose of stormwater runoff from roads and parking areas. UIC wells are also used to clean up ground water (water located under the ground's surface) and to add water to a

groundwater aquifer for storage. Septic systems that serve 20 or more people per day or designed to hold 3,500 gallons or more per day of waste are also UIC wells (e.g., an apartment building with a septic system for sanitary waste disposal).

Washington prohibits some UIC well uses, such as:

- A gas station with a service floor drain connected to a septic system.
- A strip mall with businesses that discharge sanitary wastes mixed with process water into a septic system (e.g., a photo processor or a dry cleaner.)

Why do we regulate discharges to UIC wells?

More than 60 percent of the state's population relies on ground water as a drinking water source. Fluids that collect or contain contaminants and then enter a UIC well could eventually end up in ground water. Groundwater contamination could result if a drywell is not properly located, constructed, operated, and maintained. For this reason, Washington allows only fluids that will not contaminate ground water to flow from UIC wells.

What should I do if I have a UIC well or plan to use one?

Site owners must register their UIC wells with Ecology (except those on tribal lands, which are registered with EPA Region 10). Owners must protect groundwater quality when constructing and using a UIC well. For the majority

of existing wells, owners must review how they use their wells and what goes into them. To design a new UIC well for stormwater management, see the *Guidance for UIC Wells that Manage Stormwater*. More information on existing or future wells can be found on the UIC Web site.

Who is responsible for registering a UIC well?

Site owners (or designees) are responsible for registering their UIC wells and notifying Ecology of any changes in the status of the well(s) (e.g., active, closed, change in ownership or change in use).

How do I register my UIC well?

Registration forms are available on the UIC Web site at:

www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/grndwtr/uic/registration/reg_info.html

Complete the form and send it back to the Ecology UIC coordinator. Registration is free.

Where can I find more information?

You can find more information on the UIC Web site:

www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/grndwtr/uic/

Questions can also be answered by contacting the state UIC coordinator using information provided on the back of this brochure.